

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 01438 01 OF 02 241831Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 COME-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SIL-01
LAB-04 /078 W
-----121778 241905Z /46

R 241700Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 116
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 1438

USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, IT
SUBJECT: ACLI MOVING BACK FROM RADICALISM TOWARD ACCOMODATION
WITH CHURCH AND DC.

REF: ROME 12053

1. SUMMARY. A RECENT NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC WORKERS' ASSOCIATIONS (ACLI) CONFIRMED THAT ACLI IS MODERATING ITS STANCE, MOVING BACK FROM ITS EXTREME LEFTIST POSITION OF THAT LAST DECADE TOWARD A MORE HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DC). ACLI REITERATED ITS DISTANT FOR, AND DESIRE TO MOVE BEYOND, "DE-GERNERATED AND DYING" FREE-MARKET CAPITALISM AND LUMPED IN THE SAME BAG THE MARXIST "CAPITALISM OF THE LEFT" EXTANT IN THE EAST. ACLI ADVOCATED A NEW APPROACH BASED ON MORALITY,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 01438 01 OF 02 241831Z

COOPERATIVISM AND PLANNING, AND ON COOPERATION AMONG ITALY'S MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN A REGIME OF AUSTERITY TO SUP-PLANT INDIVIDUALISM, CONSUMERISM, POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND THE SOCIAL COSTS OF ECONOMIC CRISES. ACLI OPPOSED EARLY ELECTIONS OR A DIVISIVE REFERENDUM ON ABORTION, HOPED FOR CONTINUING PCI-DC COOPERATION IN RESOLVING ITALY'S PROBLEMS AND CRITICIZED ALLEGED US INTERFERENCE. COMMUNIST (PCI)

SPOKESMAN AMENDOLA SENT A MESSAGE WELL ATTUNED TO ACLI THEMES, SAYING WORKER SACRIFICES ARE NEEDED AND CAN BE OBTAINED, BUT ONLY BY A MORALLY-CREDIBLE GOVERNMENT (PRESUMABLY MEANING ONE WITH PCI PARTICIPATION). END SUMMARY.

2. ACLI, ORIGINALLY THE SOCIAL ARM OF CATHOLIC ACTION, WAS FOUNDED IN 1945 AS AN EDUCATION, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATION FOR CATHOLIC WORKERS. ACLI SERVED AS THE BASIS FOR FORMATION OF THE CATHOLIC-ORIENTED LABOR CONFEDERATION CISL, 1978-50. IT NOW HAS ABOUT A HALF MILLION MEMBERS. USING STATE SUBSIDIES, ACLI PROVIDES VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND OPERATES A "PARTRONGAGE" TO ASSIST WORKERS IN PURSUING PENSION CLAIMS. IT ALSO OPERATES A WIDE VARIETY OF COOPERATIVES RANGING FROM INSURANCE TO FACTORY CANTEENS, AND MANY OTHER ACTIVITIES.

3. AFTER SERVING AS A CHURCH AND DC BASTION AMONG WORKERS IN EARLY YEARS, ACLI BROKE WITH BOTH, ADOPTED SOCIALISM AND THIRD-WORLD RADICALISMS, AND ALIGNED ITSELF IDEOLOGICALLY WITH THE PARTIES OF THE LEFT-PCI, SOCIALISTS (PSI) AND SPLINTER GROUPS SUCH AS PSIUP AND PDUP. THIS NEW COURSE, INITIATED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF LIVIO LABOUR (NOW A PSI PARLIAMENTARIAN), WAS ARTICULATED AT ACLI CONFERENCES AT VALLOMBROSA IN 1968 AND 1970. EMILIO GABAGLIO, NEW INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE CHRISTIAN-ORIENTED LABOR CONFEDERATION CISL, WAS THE OTHER MAIN ACLI LEADER DURING THIS PERIOD.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 01438 01 OF 02 241831Z

DURING ACLI'S RADICAL DECADE, THE CHURCH AND THE DC SEVERED RELATIONS AND CUT OFF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND WITHDREW ACLI'S VATICAN ADVISER. ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH RIVAL ORGANIZATIONS CLOSER TO CHURCH AND DC MET WITH LITTLE SUCCESS, BUT ACLI LOST INFLUENCE AND STRENGTH.

4. DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS, ACLI HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN MOVING BACK TOWARD HARMONY WITH THE CHURCH AND A LESS HOSTILE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DC. A JESUIT PRIEST, PIO PARISI, IS WORKING WITH ACLI, AND VATICAN SOURCES REPORT THAT THE CHURCH IS PLEASED AT ACLI'S RECENT EVOLUTION. THIS TREND WAS CONFIRMED BY A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ACLI HELD AT RICCIONE JANUARY 12-15, PRECEDING PREPARATION FOR ITS CONGRESS THIS JUNE. BY ALL ACCOUNTS, THE MAJOR SPEECHES BY ACLI PRESIDENT DOMENICO ROSATI AND STUDY AND RESEARCH DIRECTOR RUGGERO ORFELI, AS WELL AS DISCUSSIONS AND CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS, EMPHASIZED A RETURN TO CLOSENESS WITH THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCH DOCTRINE, AS WELL AS TO A LINE WHICH REINFORCES THE DC, OR AT LEAST THE DC REFORMIST LEFT. POPE PAUL'S ENCYCLICAL POPULORUM PROGRESSIO AND THE BIBLE WERE CITED AS INSPIRATIONAL BASES FOR THE ANALYSIS OF HOW TO OVERCOME THE COUNTRY'S (ECONOMIC) CRISIS AND MOVE ON THE NEW DEVELOP-

MENT, ON A NEW BASIS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 01438 02 OF 02 241844Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 COME-00

SIL-01 LAB-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /078 W

-----121946 241905Z /46

R 241700Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 117

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 1438

USEEC

5. THE CONFERENCE SPEECHES REITERATED ACLI'S HOSTILE CRITICISM OF "CAPITALISM" AS A NEGATIVE ECONOMIC SYSTEM, HELPFUL IN ITS EARLY DAYS, BUT DEPENDENT ON SPONTANEOUS OR "ACCIDENTAL" FACTORS AND STIMULI WHICH NO LONGER OCCUR, FOR WHICH REASON CAPITALISM HAS RUN OUT OF STEAM AND NEEDS TO BE REPLACED BY A MODEL BASED ON PLANNING AND MORALITY, AUSTERITY AND UNSELFISHNESS, COOPERATIVISM AND POPULORUM PROGRESSIO, AND WHICH WOULD ALSO AVOID THE HIGH SOCIAL COSTS OF THE CAPITALIST APPROACH. ACLI SPEAKERS CALLED THE SYSTEM IN THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES "CAPITALISM OF THE LEFT" AND THUS PART OF WHAT THEY TERMED THE DEGENERATE AND DYING CAPITALIST SYSTEM TO WHICH AN ALTERNATIVE MUST BE FOUND. ACLI ALSO PROPOSED A 2-4 HOUR REDUCTION IN THE WORK WEEK, TO BE USED FOR UNPAID SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

6. POLITICALLY, ACLI CALLED FOR HARMONIOUS COOPERATION

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 01438 02 OF 02 241844Z

AMONG ITALY'S POLITICAL PARTIES, INCLUDING THE PCI, CONTINUING THE EXPERIENCE OF THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, TO SOLVE ITALY'S ILLS, SOOTHE DISCORD, AND DEVELOP A NEW ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEM BASED ON CHRISTIAN VALUES. ACLI OPPOSES NEW ELECTIONS AND THE HOLDING OF THE REFERENDUM ON ABORTION AS DIVISIVE, AND URGES PSI AND PCI COOPERATION IN WORKING OUT AN ABORTION SOLUTION BASED ON THE RIGHT TO LIFE. THE ACLI CONFERENCE REACTED NEGATIVELY TO THE DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT ON EUROCOMMUNISM AND DENOUNCED THOSE WHO "TRY TO USE IT TO PUT OVER POSITIONS THEY WERE UNABLE TO GET ACCPETED ON MERIT."

7. PCI, PSI AND OUTSIDE CATHOLIC SPOKESMEN WERE INVITED TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE. PCI ELDER STATESMAN GIORGIO AMENDOLA, TOO ILL TO ATTEND, SENT A LONG ADDRESS, WHICH WAS READ TO THE CONFERENCE. ASIDE FROM CRITICISING ACLI FOR LUMPING EASTERN SOCIALISM IN WITH CAPITALISM RATHER THAN ANALYSING IT CRITICALLY BUT SERIOUSLY, AMENDOLA STRESSED MANY OF THE SAME THEMES AS ACLI. IN THE PAST, WAGE INCREASES TO CATCH UP TO EUROPE WERE LAUDABLE AND NECESSARY, BUT THE PCI RECOGNIZES THAT RESTRAINT AND AUSTERITY ARE NOW NECESSARY. MORAL POLLUTION IS REACHING THE WORKING CLASS. SHORTER HOURS ARE USED FOR MOONLIGHTING OR OVERTIME TO MAKE MORE PAY, INSTEAD OF FOR MORE WHOLESOME FAMILY LIFE OR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY. WORKERS SAY WAGES ARE FALLING BEHIND INFLATION AND NEEDS ARE INCREASING, BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE. REAL WAGES KEEP INCREASING, BUT WORKERS ARE DRAWN MORE AND MORE INTO WASTEFUL AND UNWHOLESOME CONSUMPTION ON THE BASIS OF ARTIFICIALLY CREATED NEEDS. AUSTERITY, SEVERITY AND A NEW MORALITY DIRECTED TOWARD THE COMMUNITY INSTEAD OF SELFISH INDIVIDUALISM IS NEEDED, AND THE WORKERS WILL LISTEN, BUT ONLY TO GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES WHO HAVE "THEIR CARDS MORALLY IN ORDER."

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 01438 02 OF 02 241844Z

8. COMMENT. ACLI'S RETURN TO THE FOLD IS EVIDENTLY PART OF A PROGRAM OF CONSOLIDATION OF CATHOLIC FORCES IN THE FACE OF THE NEW SITUATION CREATED BY COMMUNIST ELECTION VICOTIRES IN 1975 AND 1976 AND THE PCI'S DE FACTO PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNING ITALY SINCE MID-1976. A MAJOR MOTIVATION FOR ACLI TO RETURN WAS UNDOUBTEDLY ITS LOSS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, MEMBERSHIP AND POLITICAL AND WORK PLACE INFLUENCE WHILE CUT OFF FROM THE CHURCH, DC AND CISL. ANOTHER FACTOR IS THAT ACLI'S LEADERSHIP GROUP IS CLOSE IDEOLOGICALLY AND PERSONALLY TO CISL'S NEW LEADERS, PARTICULARLY DEPTUY SECRETARY GENERAL PIERRE CARNITI AND,

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS CHIEF GABAGLIO, WHO ALSO SEEM TO BE MOVING CLOSER TO THE DC. ALSO, THE DC'S "NEW FORCES" (FORZE NUOVE) CURRENT (LED BY CARLO DONAT-CATTIN) IS A STRONG MINORITY FORCE WITHIN ACLI AS WELL AS CISL, AND FORZE NUOVA, LONG CONSIDERED ONE OF TWO MAJOR GROUPS OF THE DC LEFT, HAS SHIFTED IN RECENT YEARS FROM AN OPEN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PCI TO OUTSPOKEN ANTI-COMMUNISM. AS A RESULT OF THE RECONCILIATION, ACLI HAS ALREADY PICKED UP CHURCH SUPPORT, AND CAN PROBABLY HOPE TO REABSORB ITS UNSUCCESSFUL MODERATE RIVAL, MCL (OR "MOCLI"), THE CATHOLIC WORKERS' MOVEMENT, WHICH WAS CREATED (AS NOTED ABOVE) AFTER ACLI SPLIT AWAY FROM THE CHURCH AND DC.

9. ACLI'S SHIFT BACK TOWARD THE CHURCH AND DC IS HELPFUL IN THAT IT SHOULD REINFORCE THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION FORCES AMONG WORKERS, EMPLOYEES AND MEMBERS CO-OPERATIVES, BUT ACLI'S ATTITUDES REMAIN BASICALLY HOSTILE TOWARD FREE-ENTERPRISE, FREE-MARKET, PROFIT-BASED ECONOMIES; CONSUMPTION-BASED, INDIVIDUALISTIC SOCIETIES; AND MANY AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY GOALS AND ACTIONS. END COMMENTS.
GARDNER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, LABOR UNIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES, LABOR POLICY LINE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME01438
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780036-0055
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780129/aaaaaxyz.tel
Line Count: 244
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1ce3a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ROME 12053
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3723041
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACLI MOVING BACK FROM RADICALISM TOWARD ACCOMODATION WITH CHURCH AND DC.
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, IT, ACLI, ITALIAN CATHOLIC WORKERS ASSOC
To: STATE USEEC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1ce3a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014